

# Insights

## **MONEY-SAVING MOVES FOR YOUR BUSINESS**

Smart ideas for tough times

### **Customize Connectivity**

Reduce your data  
networking costs

### **Upside of Downtime**

Make productive  
use of slow periods



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#### Editorial and Circulation

Amy Kim  
6399 South Fiddler's Green Circle, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Greenwood Village, CO 80111  
303.323.6015  
[amy.kim@chartercom.com](mailto:amy.kim@chartercom.com)

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Amy Kim  
6399 South Fiddler's Green Circle, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Greenwood Village, CO 80111  
303.323.6015  
[amy.kim@chartercom.com](mailto:amy.kim@chartercom.com)

#### Postmaster

Send Changes To: Amy Kim  
Charter Business  
6399 South Fiddler's Green Circle, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Greenwood Village, CO 80111



Charter  
Business

# Insights

**Welcome to the first issue** of *Charter Business Insights*, a three-times-yearly publication created for our business customers. You can expect it to help you better understand the communications technologies available today as well as provide information about specific business topics such as management and marketing.

In light of the current economy, we chose to focus this issue on ways for your business to reduce expenses while maintaining the services you need. For example, on pages 4 and 5, you'll find a number of money-saving strategies, such as opting for a bundle of services from one provider and extending the terms of your contracts. And on page 7, we share a business profile of Ironkeep Technologies in Traverse City, Michigan—a company that appreciates the flexibility and redundancy provided by our cost-efficient fiber services.

We hope you enjoy reading *Charter Business Insights* and gain ideas for making the most of every dollar during these challenging times. For additional information on any of the areas covered, please call us at 888.889.9730.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Stark".

Jill Stark  
Vice President,  
Charter Business,  
West Operating Group





## THANKS FOR BEING A LOYAL CUSTOMER

Thank you for making Charter Business® your communications partner. As a customer, you are the most important part of our business. That's why we back your internet, telephone, and cable TV solutions with 24/7/365 business-class customer support. When you need us, we'll be there to give you our best.

As a loyal customer, you may already be saving by bundling with Charter Business. But if you're not in a bundle, you can save with a discount off the standard monthly rate when you combine Charter Business Internet, Telephone, and/or Cable TV in one convenient monthly bill. Call 888.889.9730 today or visit [Charter-Business.com/Insights](http://Charter-Business.com/Insights).



# The Upside of Downtime

Take advantage of slow periods to increase your knowledge

**Most businesses** experience ebbs and flows in their workloads. One month, you're running ragged; the next, your employees are searching for things to do.

While downtime may indicate that steps need to be taken to increase sales, it can also simply be an opportunity to prepare for the next period of heavy activity. When work is light, you and your employees can devote more time to business planning and research—tasks that often get set aside during hectic periods.

Here are suggestions for using your company's downtime productively:

### DEVELOP AND UPDATE CORPORATE DOCUMENTS

Whether it's your employee manual or client contracts, you can use downtime to enhance communications with both your staff and your customers.

### CHECK IN WITH EXISTING CLIENTS

Downtime provides an excellent opportunity for you or your account management team to contact existing, but inactive, clients about their current needs.

### STUDY INDUSTRY TRENDS

Spend time researching what others in your industry (or your clients' industries) are doing, and think about new ways to stay competitive. You may decide to add new products and services or to adjust internal processes for improved efficiency.

**When work is light, you and your employees can devote more time to business planning and research.**

### NETWORK

Get out of the office and start attending local Chamber of Commerce events or other community activities. Any new contacts you make could result in new relationships and more work for your company.

### SURVEY YOUR CUSTOMERS

You can get valuable feedback on what they appreciate most about you, where they see room for improvement, or what other products and services they'd like you to provide. Then you can create a plan of action for assessing feasibility and addressing those issues. ■

# Money-Saving Moves For Your Business

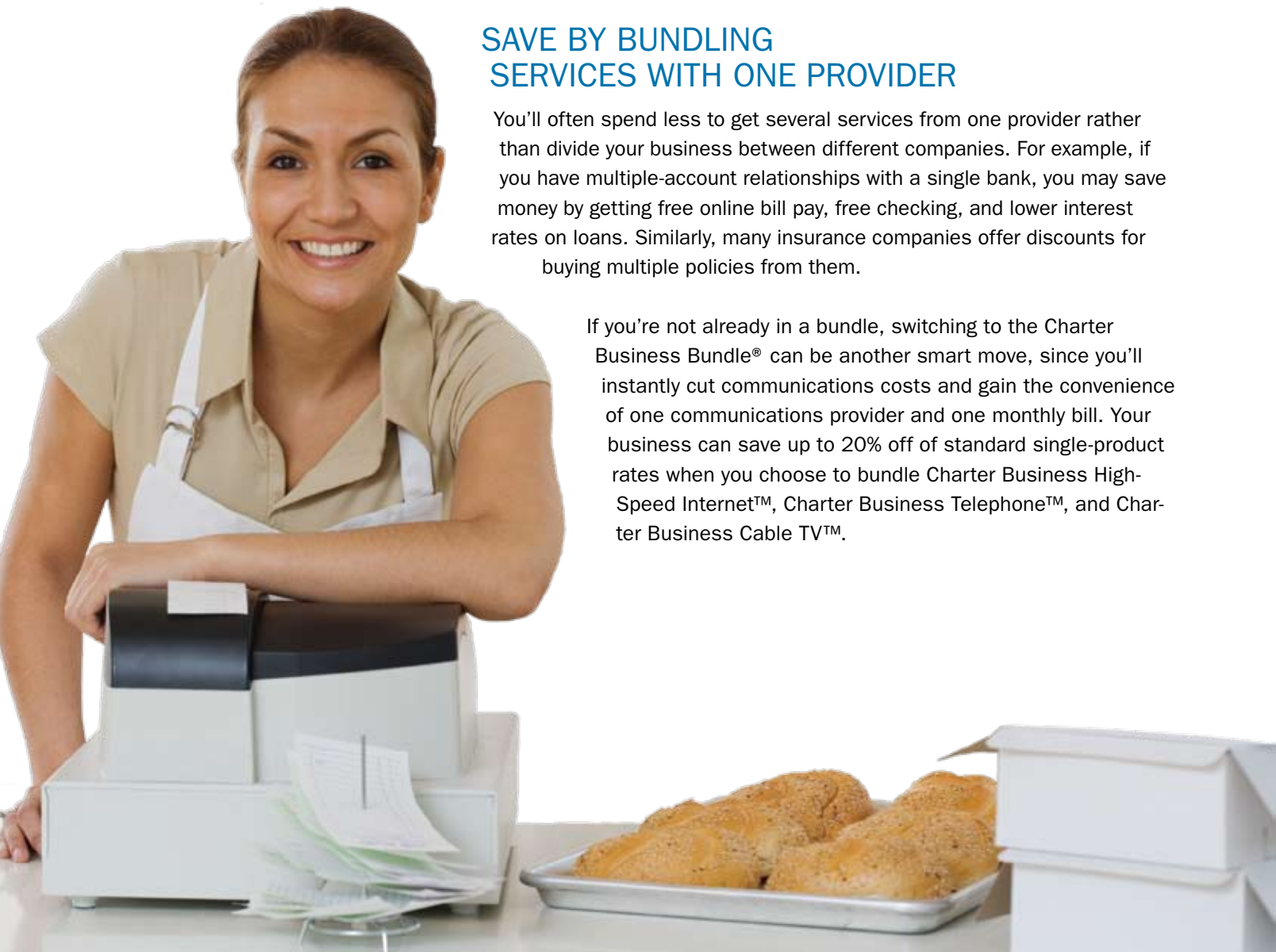
Rather than buy less, you can buy smarter using these tactics for tough times.


**T**oday's economy requires all businesses to "trim the fat" from their budgets and get maximum value from every dollar spent. To accomplish this, you may need to do more homework and put more thought into every buying decision. Are you getting the best deal available on office supplies and shipping? Could you take steps to reduce your company's energy use and utility expenses? Are there opportunities to save on your overhead by renegotiating your lease? Sometimes even small changes can save your company big money.

## SAVE BY BUNDLING SERVICES WITH ONE PROVIDER

You'll often spend less to get several services from one provider rather than divide your business between different companies. For example, if you have multiple-account relationships with a single bank, you may save money by getting free online bill pay, free checking, and lower interest rates on loans. Similarly, many insurance companies offer discounts for buying multiple policies from them.

If you're not already in a bundle, switching to the Charter Business Bundle® can be another smart move, since you'll instantly cut communications costs and gain the convenience of one communications provider and one monthly bill. Your business can save up to 20% off of standard single-product rates when you choose to bundle Charter Business High-Speed Internet™, Charter Business Telephone™, and Charter Business Cable TV™.





**Save up to 20%  
when you bundle  
data, telephone, and  
video services with  
Charter Business.**

## REDUCE RATES BY EXTENDING CONTRACT TERMS

Take a look at your service contracts and leases for office space, warehouses, and vehicles. You may be able to significantly reduce your monthly overhead expenses simply by renegotiating and extending the length of term. Charter Business offers a tier of increasing discounts for 12-month, 24-month, or 36-month term commitments, and a variety of other companies may also give discounts for longer contract terms.

“This is an excellent strategy for companies seeking to minimize costs and lock in a guaranteed price for their communications services,” notes Jim McGann, vice president and general manager, Charter Business. He continues, “I encourage our customers to speak with a Charter Business sales representative to find out the most cost-efficient solution for them.”

If you need new office equipment, leasing rather than buying can help protect your cash reserves and keep monthly expenses down. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, 85% of all companies lease equipment.

**“This is an excellent strategy for companies seeking to minimize costs and lock in a guaranteed price for their communications services...”**


— JIM MCGANN, VICE PRESIDENT  
AND GENERAL MANAGER, CHARTER BUSINESS

## MINIMIZE DOWNTIME BY CHOOSING RELIABLE VENDORS

Now more than ever, your business needs to operate with a high level of productivity—there’s no time for downtime. A service outage or equipment failure could cost you a great deal in lost output and put you at a competitive disadvantage. Be sure to factor in reliability as well as price when selecting your suppliers. The best business values combine competitive prices with outstanding service performance.

**A service outage or equipment failure could cost you a great deal in lost output and put you at a competitive disadvantage.**

At Charter Business, we know how critical your data, telephone, and video services are to the functioning of your daily operations. That’s why we deliver all of our services over our highly reliable state-of-the-art network. U.S.-based, dedicated business-customer support is available 24/7/365 and is backed by local Charter Business technicians. ■



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# Customize Connectivity to Cut Costs

Ethernet is scalable, expandable, and efficient

**What is Ethernet?** It is a data-transport technology that makes sharing information between computers across town as simple as sharing information between computers across the hall. Ethernet is a scalable alternative to traditional high-speed-access solutions that allows businesses to extend their reach to a metropolitan-area network (MAN), and deploy data and voice services across a wide area.

Ethernet services can offer multiple advantages over traditional data solutions, especially for businesses with multiple locations. This technology is:

## SCALABLE

Bandwidth can be increased or decreased on demand without changing equipment or adding circuits.

## EXPANDABLE

New locations can be added easily without service interruptions.

## EFFICIENT

Employees at different locations are able to operate as if they are working in the same building and can collaborate more efficiently and effectively.

By choosing Ethernet, a business can achieve more speed at a lower cost as well as increase productivity, improve customer value, and better manage uncertainties.

If you're interested in exploring what Ethernet could do for your business, we invite you to contact Charter Business® Fiber Services. We provide custom-designed fiber-optic data networking systems that connect your transparent LAN and WAN and allow multiple locations to work seamlessly as one unit. We also offer optical Ethernet WAN services that deliver bandwidth and topology customized to the needs of your individual site.

These services can help your business save both time and money. You can upload and download files equally fast, with symmetrical fiber internet speeds from 2Mbps and optical Ethernet speeds from 10Mbps up to 10Gbps. You can also opt for burstable fiber services that let you burst up to higher speeds periodically without paying for those higher speeds on a regular basis. Workflow downtime is virtually eliminated due to our proven reliable network with built-in redundancy, proactive monitoring, and dedicated 24/7/365 Network Operations Center.

Pete Hicks, director of product management, Charter Business,

emphasizes the value provided by Charter Business Fiber Services: "We recognize that value is a significant factor when considering business services. Businesses can simplify operations, and cut costs, by resolving complex communication needs with a single provider that can accommodate the most demanding data center, connect disperse office locations, and integrate work-at-home employees." ■

## CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS® IS MEF 9 CERTIFIED

Charter Communications has obtained the Metro Ethernet Forum (MEF) Certification. The MEF is a global industry alliance created to develop technical specifications and implementation agreements to promote interoperability and deployment of Carrier Ethernet worldwide.



# Ironkeep Technologies Values Our Local Presence

**Ironkeep Technologies** in Traverse City, Michigan, delivers a wide range of IT services, including consulting, web design, web hosting, programming, and networking. Founded in 2000 by Albert Steed and Zachary Schneider, Ironkeep started as a small consulting and network security operation in a cramped one-room office packed with servers. The business grew and prospered, which led them to Charter Business in order to gain redundancy for their T1 line. Ironkeep later upgraded their data service and made Charter Business their primary broadband provider.

Albert Steed says the most important factor in Ironkeep's choice of Charter Business was their local presence in the community. He notes, "Charter Business provides great service and support through their local offices and technicians. We can get help promptly, which is something you don't always get from other communications providers. Plus, Charter Business supports this community—they employ local people, do business with local companies, and donate to local charities. That's very important to us. We feel good about spending money with Charter Business since we know it stays right here."

In addition to this local presence, Steed appreciates the flexibility and redundancy of the fiber service that Charter Business provides. "It allows us to increase our capacity at a moment's notice," says Steed, "as compared to



Zachary Schneider (left) and Albert Steed are partners in Ironkeep Technologies.

**"Charter Business provides great service and support through their local offices and technicians. We can get help promptly, which is something you don't always get from other communications providers."**

—ALBERT STEED, IRONKEEP TECHNOLOGIES

other services that may involve a three-month waiting period to make changes. We also get redundancy from Charter Business due to their SONET loop around town. If there's a cut in any line, the service continues by going around the loop in the other direction. With Charter Business as our provider, we don't have to worry about downtime."

Steed concludes, "It's great to have Charter Business close by whenever we need them. Their engineers always come up with the best and most cost-efficient ways to meet our challenges. In short, Charter Business does a good job of making our business look good." ■

## EARN A \$50 CREDIT ON YOUR BILL

The Charter Business Refer-A-Business Program makes it easy to earn a \$50 credit on your Charter Business bill. All you have to do is let us know about business contacts who could benefit from our services by completing an online lead form at [Charter-Business.com/BusinessReferral](http://Charter-Business.com/BusinessReferral).

We'll contact your referral and handle the rest. Once your referral's services are installed and they are billed, we'll give each of you a \$50 credit toward your bills. Some restrictions apply; see our website for complete details.

# Centex Equipment is Sold on Charter Business Reliability

**Centex Equipment**, located in Fort Worth, Texas, buys and sells heavy construction equipment such as forklifts, backhoes, and graders. Most of their business is done online, including the purchase of equipment and their sales through [machinerytrader.com](http://machinerytrader.com) and [centex-equipment.com](http://centex-equipment.com). So when Centex experienced frequent internet problems with their previous provider, it became imperative for the company to make a change.

Manager Joe Connell recalls, “We had big troubles with the national provider we were using at the time—our internet service went down six or seven times a day. This caused us to be kicked off online auctions and lose out on the chance to buy several machines we wanted. I’d had enough. I decided to switch to Charter Business since my internet service at home was from Charter and I didn’t have any problems with it.”

Connell continues, “I called Charter Business and they were here the next day for installation. Their internet service is very reliable, which saves us a lot of headaches. Plus it’s fast.”

In addition to Charter Business High-Speed Internet™, Centex Equipment also gets Charter Business Telephone™ and Charter Business Cable TV™ for all-day news programming. According to Connell,



While the Centex Equipment inventory is in Fort Worth, most of their business is done online at [centex-equipment.com](http://centex-equipment.com).

**“I called Charter Business and they were here the next day for installation. Their internet service is very reliable, which saves us a lot of headaches.”**

—JOE CONNELL, CENTEX EQUIPMENT

he’s been pleased with the service they receive on everything. “We’re a small operation but we do a lot of business and sell 20-25 machines a month. I appreciate how helpful and responsive Charter Business has been to us. The reliability of their service keeps our business running smoothly. And having the Charter Business Bundle® has been great. I like the convenience of receiving just one bill, and we’re paying \$40 a month less than we were before.”

Would Connell recommend Charter Business to others? He responds, “Absolutely. They’re reliable and professional, and you can count on getting good service. Switching to them was a smart move for us.” ■

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# Greenville Radiology Stays Connected with Charter Business

**Greenville Radiology** (GRPA), located in Greenville, South Carolina, is a growing practice with 41 board-certified radiologists in a variety of sub-specialty areas including neuroradiology, musculoskeletal radiology, and ultrasonography. This multi-specialty feature enables Greenville Radiology to provide essential services to hospitals in Upstate South Carolina and beyond.



Robert Stephenson Jr., IT Director, in front of Greenville Radiology.

Robert Stephenson Jr., IT Director for Greenville Radiology, recalls that they initially approached Charter Business several years ago with their need for a connection to Greenville Memorial Hospital to transmit digital medical imaging. Says Stephenson, “The number one thing we needed was reliability. We needed as close to 100% uptime as possible due to the critical nature of these images. If there’s an emergent care patient need in the middle of the night at a local hospital, those images can be sent to the PACS system at GRPA. Greenville Radiology provides 24/7 service and, with the right connections, can deliver the fast reading of scans that patients require.”

Stephenson continues, “Charter Business clearly wanted to be part of the team and set us up with a fast and reliable fiber connection to Greenville Memorial Hospital. Over the years, other healthcare facilities were added—Palmetto Baptist Medical Center, Mary Black Hospital, Laurens County Hospital, and Greenville Radiology Breast Center. Today, Charter Business provides us with a 10Mbps fiber circuit to the internet,

**“We’ve found we can count on Charter Business. They’ve provided the near 100% uptime we sought.”**

—ROBERT STEPHENSON JR.,  
GREENVILLE RADIOLOGY

a total of five MetroE circuits to surrounding hospitals, and connections for four transcriptionists that are remote home users. We’ve found we can count on Charter Business. They’ve provided the near 100% uptime we sought.”

Stephenson also appreciates his excellent ongoing relationship with Charter Business. He says, “It’s by far one of the best relationships I’ve had in the business field.” More evidence that for Greenville Radiology, it’s all about connections. ■

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We’ll contact your referral and handle the rest. Once your referral’s services are installed and they are billed, we’ll give each of you a \$50 credit toward your bills. Some restrictions apply; see our website for complete details.

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